THE PUNISHER
MARVEL
EDMONDSON
GERADS
SCHOONOVER
017

FRANK CASTLE was once a decorated Marine officer, an upstanding citizen and family man. Then his family was violently taken from him when they were accidentally killed in a mob hit. From that day on, Frank Castle shed his old identity and became a force of cold, calculated retribution and vigilantism known as

THE PUNISHER

PREVIOUSLY

After being shot at by the Howling Commandos, the Punisher escaped south of the border where he was captured by a drug lord, sold, escaped, voluntarily went to prison, and escaped again. In the Punisher's absence the gangs have risen, led by the second Del Sol brother, plunging L.A. into chaos.

Captured by the Howling Commandos, Frank cast suspicion on the true nature of their orders, and team leader Sidewinder let Frank go on the condition he find the truth.

Frank extracted a confession from the rogue U.S. Secretary behind the violence and caught it all on tape. Though Frank opted to expose the Secretary instead of kill him, his escape through Arlington National Cemetery was foiled…by Captain America!

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

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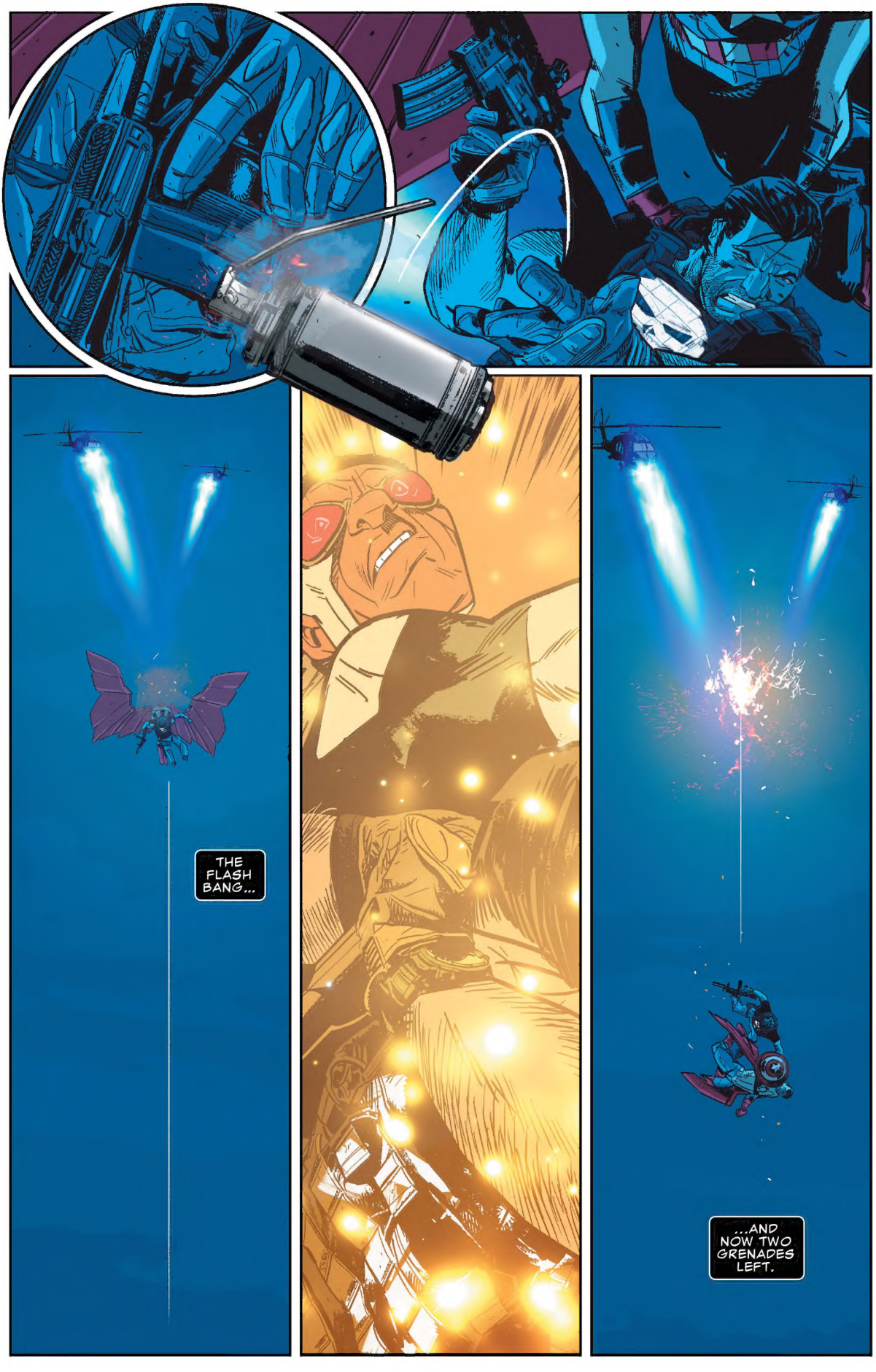
THERE IS A STRATUM OF CRIMINALS TOO SMALL FOR THE HEROES, TOO VICIOUS FOR THE POLICE.
THAT'S MY FIELD OF BATTLE.
I'M BEYOND THE FRONT LINE, NOW.
TWO STANDARD GRENADES LEFT, ONE FLASH BANG.
ONE MAGAZINE REMAINS. SIX SHOTGUN ROUNDS.

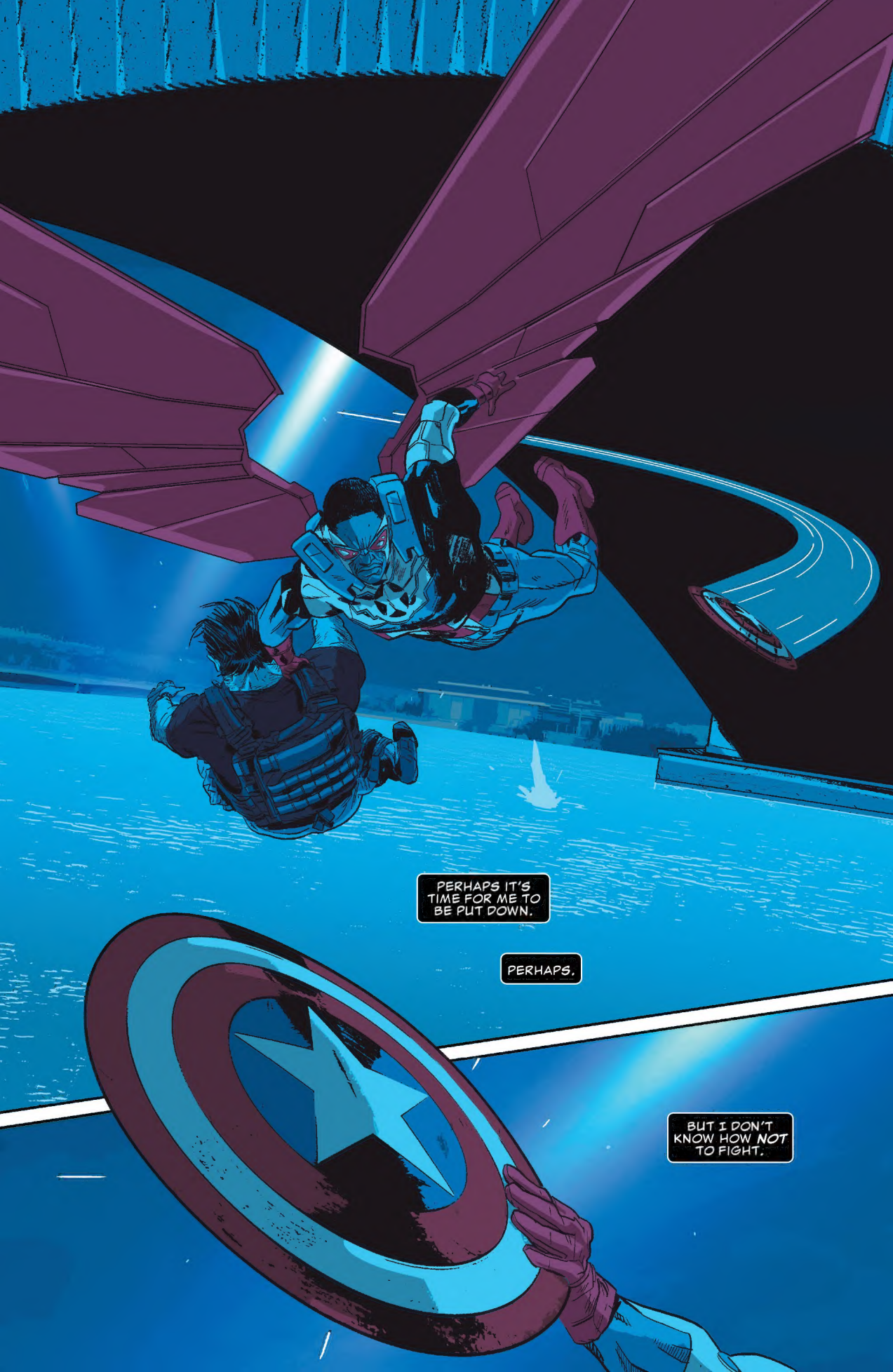
I'M OUTMATCHED.

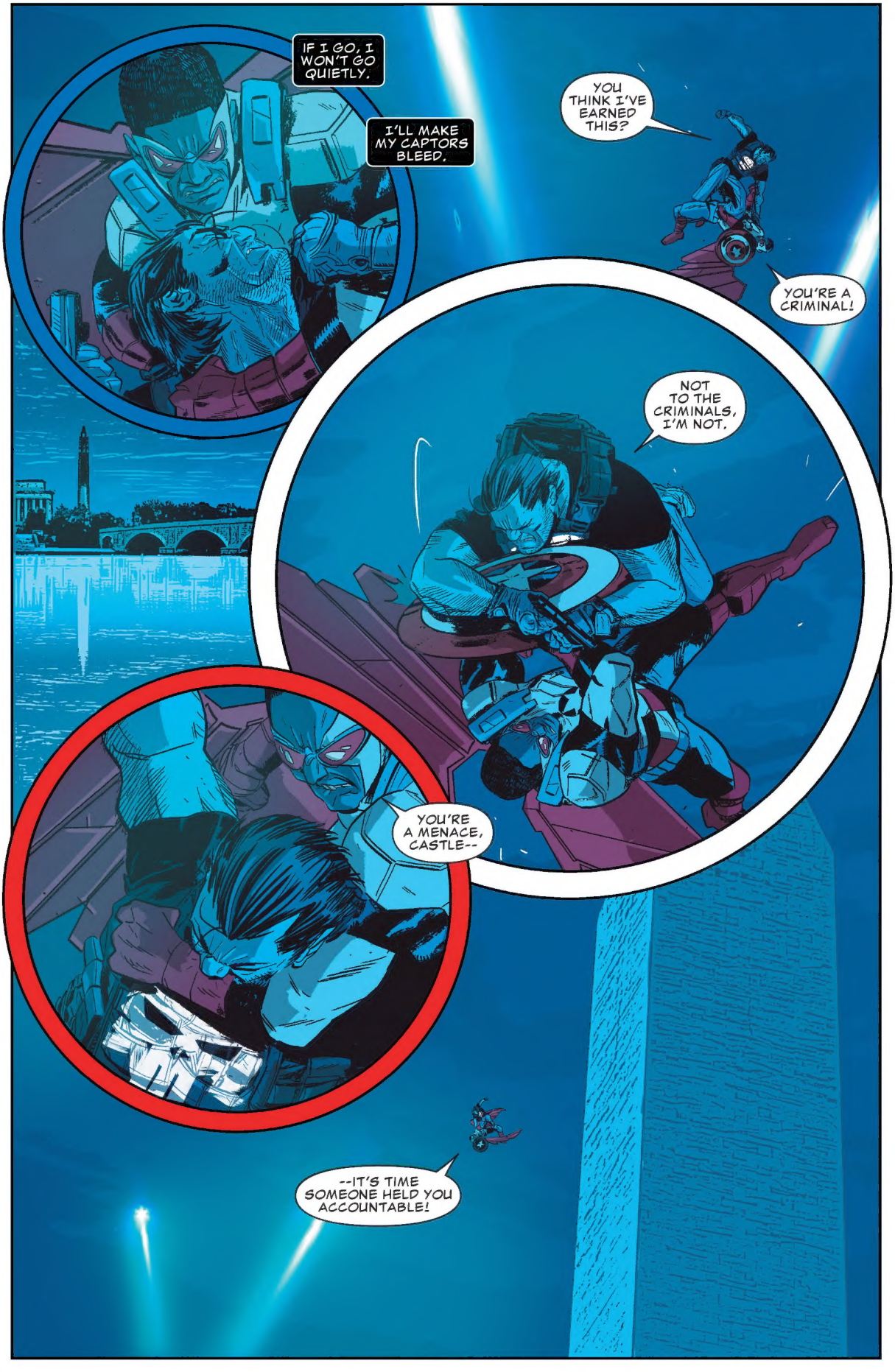

THE FLASH BANG...
...AND NOW TWO GRENADES LEFT.

WE'VE LET YOU SLIDE AROUND ON YOUR BELLY FOR TOO LONG, YOU TREACHEROUS SNAKE.
NO, I'M NOT--
DID THEY SEND CAPTAIN AMERICA TO INSULT ME?
--I'M HERE TO END YOUR REIGN OF TERROR.
TELL ME EXACTLY WHAT I'VE DONE WRONG, CAPTAIN.
YOU'VE INCITED A RIOT, ABDUCTED A SECRETARY OF THE UNITED STATES.
GUILTY. OF ALL OF IT. BUT I WON'T SUBMIT TO YOU.
YOU'RE A POSTER BOY FACING A VETERAN, WILSON. YOU MIGHT RETHINK YOUR STANDING.
YOU MIGHT BACK OFF.

I HATE BEING HUNTED.
BUT I'VE SPENT A YEAR BEING THE PREY. ON THE RUN. LIKE A DOG.
BUT IF I'M A DOG, THEN LIKE A DOG I'LL SNAP WHEN CORNERED...
...I'LL DIG MY CLAWS INTO THE MUD...
...BLOODY MY FANGS ON THE HAND THAT REACHES FOR ME.
LOTS OF CIVILIANS ON THE ROAD DOWN THERE, CAP.
KEENLY AWARE. AND, I SUSPECT, SO IS HE.

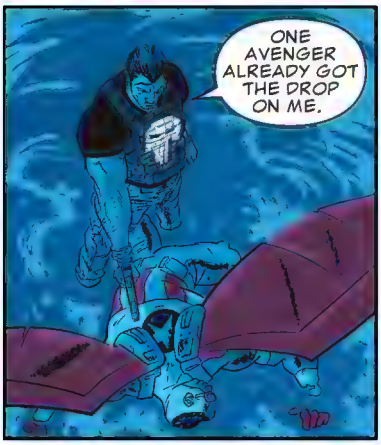
CLEAR THE AIRSPACE, SOLDIERS. I'M GOING TO GET HIM AWAY FROM THE PUBLIC.
COPY THAT, CAP. PULLING BACK. BUT NEWS VULTURES CAN'T BE FAR OFF.
I'M A LONG WAY FROM THE MARINES.
FERAL NOW, AND VICIOUS. PERHAPS...
...IT'S TIME FOR THE HUNT TO BE OVER.


PERHAPS IT'S TIME FOR ME TO BE PUT DOWN.
PERHAPS.
BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW NOT TO FIGHT.


IF I GO, I WON'T GO QUIETLY.
I'LL MAKE MY CAPTORS BLEED.
YOU THINK I'VE EARNED THIS?
YOU'RE A CRIMINAL!
NOT TO THE CRIMINALS, I'M NOT.
YOU'RE A MENACE, CASTLE--
--IT'S TIME SOMEONE HELD YOU ACCOUNTABLE!

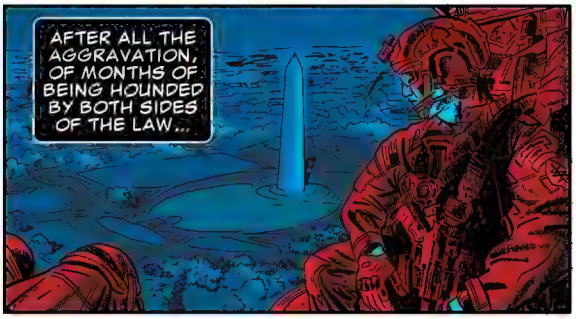
YOU'RE COMING IN TO ANSWER FOR YOUR CRIMES.
YOU'RE COMING IN *TONIGHT.*
GIVE IT UP, CASTLE. I'M NOT SOME STREET THUG, I'M AN *AVENGER.* YOU'RE OUTMATCHED.
MARINES DON'T RETREAT, AND WE DON'T SURRENDER.
NOT WHEN I STILL HAVE WORK TO DO.
NOT WHEN I STILL HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER.

YOU THINK YOU'VE OFFERED SOMETHING TO ANYONE BUT YOURSELF?
INCITING VIOLENCE? KILLING WITHOUT DUE PROCESS? A TRAIL OF BLOOD, FRANK.
YOU'RE A MENACE.
AND IT'S OVER.
THAT SOME CALL YOU HERO--
--INSULTS ME.
TWO GRENADES LEFT...
...NOW ONE.

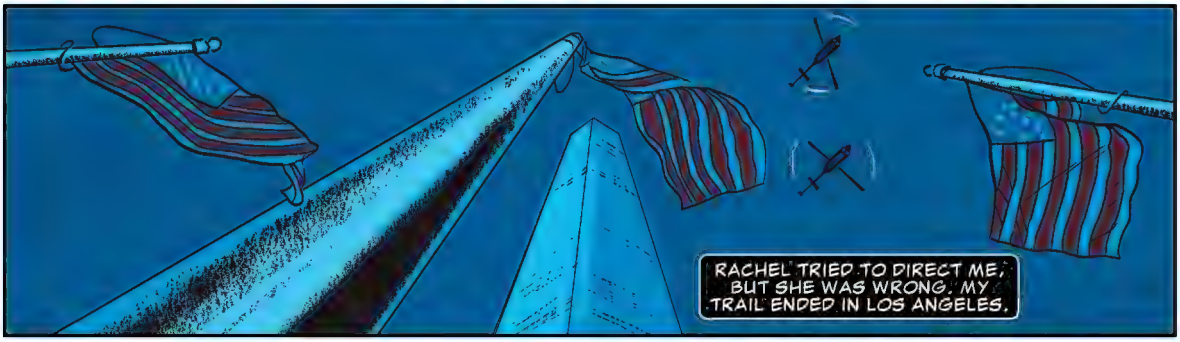

ONE AVENGER ALREADY GOT THE DROP ON ME.

NOT AGAIN. NOT THIS YEAR.
I DON'T WANT TO SHOOT YOU.
I WANT OUT OF THIS FIGHT.
BANG!

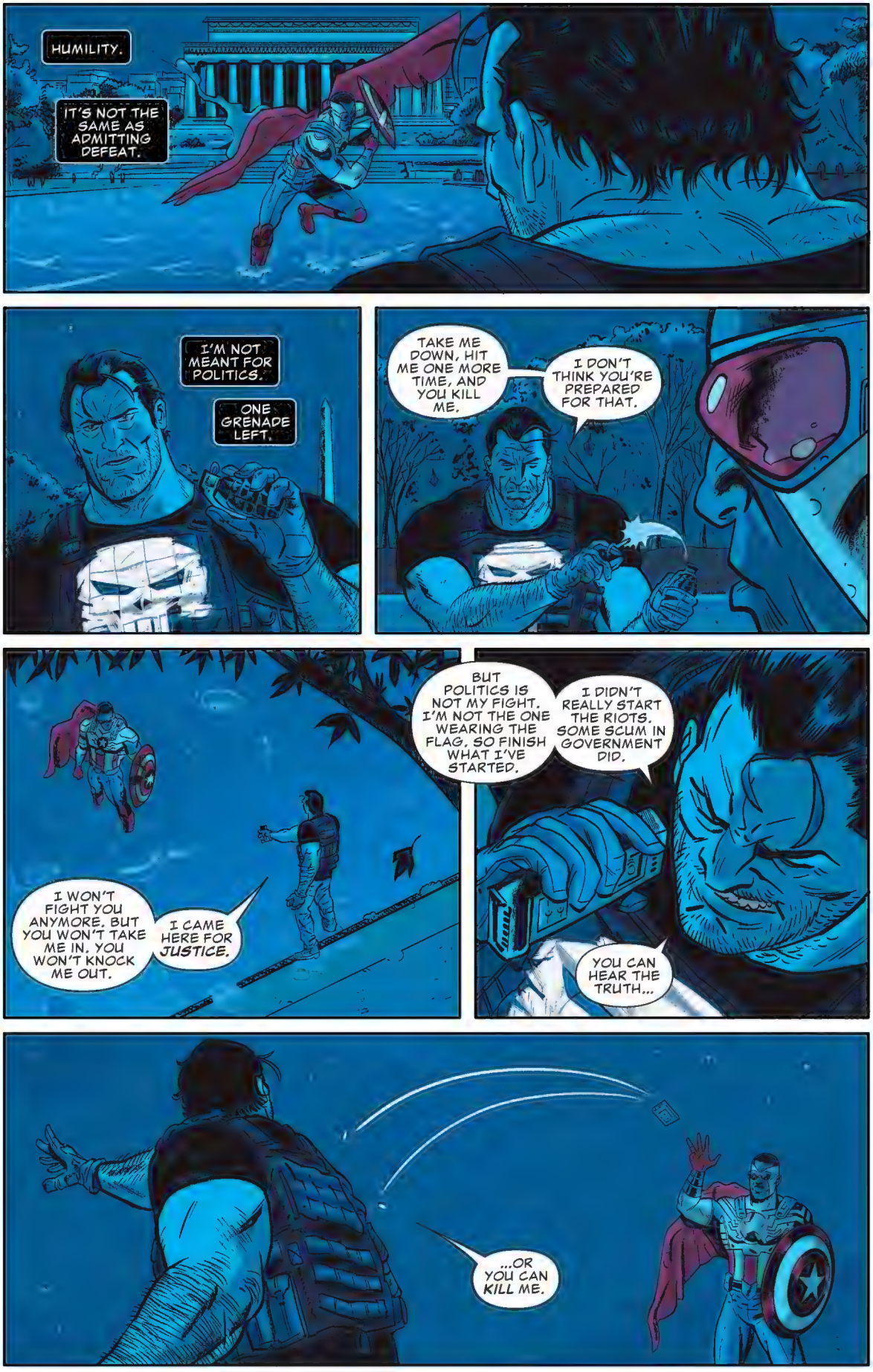
THAT QUICKLY: IN A HEARTBEAT IT ALL BECAME CLEAR.


AFTER ALL THE AGGRAVATION, OF MONTHS OF BEING HOUNDED BY BOTH SIDES OF THE LAW...

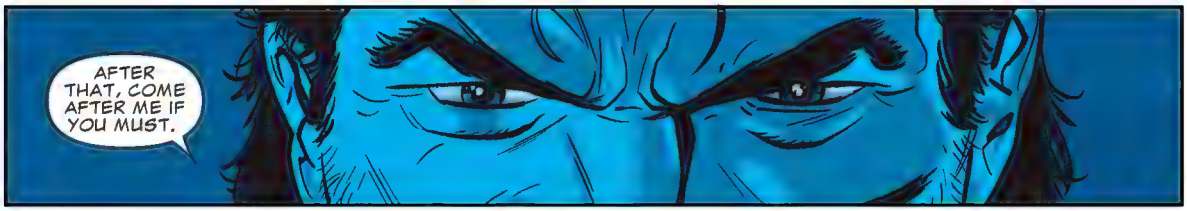
...OF FIGHTING AN ENEMY TOO LOFTY FOR ONE VIGILANTE TO TOPPLE...


RACHEL TRIED TO DIRECT ME, BUT SHE WAS WRONG. MY TRAIL ENDED IN LOS ANGELES.

MY PATHWAY IS *THE STREETS.* THE BRIDGES. THE SUBWAYS.

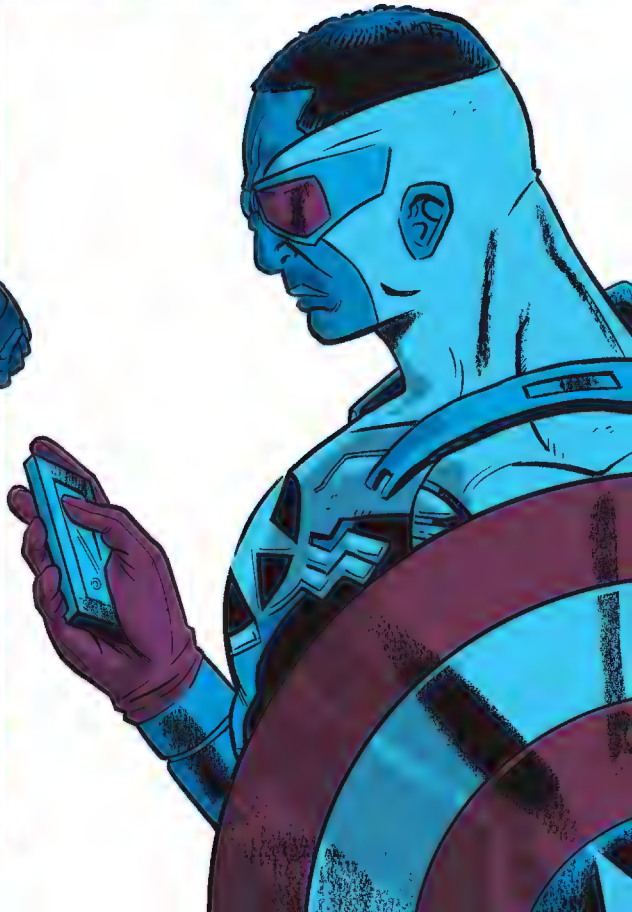

HUMILITY.
IT'S NOT THE SAME AS ADMITTING DEFEAT.
I'M NOT MEANT FOR POLITICS.
ONE GRENADE LEFT.
TAKE ME DOWN, HIT ME ONE MORE TIME, AND YOU KILL ME.
I DON'T THINK YOU'RE PREPARED FOR THAT.
I WON'T FIGHT YOU ANYMORE. BUT YOU WON'T TAKE ME IN. YOU WON'T KNOCK ME OUT.
I CAME HERE FOR JUSTICE.
BUT POLITICS IS NOT MY FIGHT. I'M NOT THE ONE WEARING THE FLAG. SO FINISH WHAT I'VE STARTED.
I DIDN'T REALLY START THE RIOTS. SOME SCUM IN GOVERNMENT DID.
YOU CAN HEAR THE TRUTH...
...OR YOU CAN KILL ME.

WHAT IS THIS, EXACTLY?
YOU'LL HAVE TO LISTEN TO IT.


AFTER THAT, COME AFTER ME IF YOU MUST.

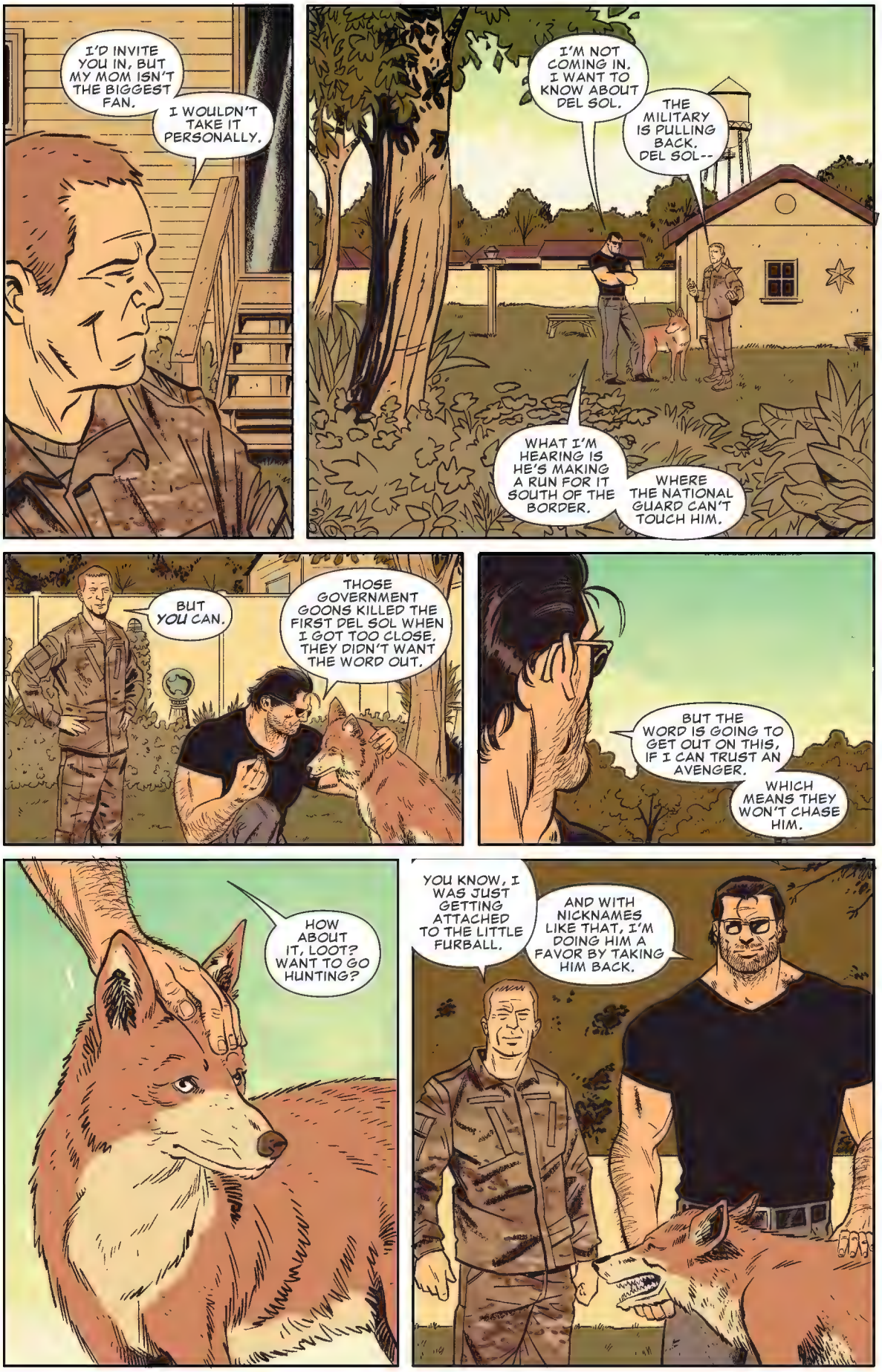
HUNT ME DOWN AND KILL ME. I WON'T BE HIDING.
BUT IF YOU COME...

...I'D BRING THE OTHER AVENGERS ALONG.



ONE GRENADE LEFT.
THEY'LL COME FOR ME AGAIN.
BUT THEY HAVE BIGGER DOGS TO HUNT RIGHT NOW.
I COULD HAVE JOINED THEM. LONG AGO I MIGHT HAVE.
BUT I'M NOT LIKE THEY ARE.
I'M HOW THE STREETS NEED ME.
NO MATTER WHAT THEY THROW AT THE CITIES, NO MATTER HOW MANY HEROES ARE IN THE SKIES, OR TANKS ARE ON THE GROUND...
...I'LL ALWAYS HAVE TARGETS.

YES, MOM, I'LL WASH MY OWN DISH. START THE MACHINE.
YEAH, I DIDN'T WANT IT EITHER, PAL.
THE COYOTE NEEDS SOME REAL GAME. SOME REAL MEAT.
WELL, HE WOULDN'T EAT MY MOM'S MEATLOAF, EITHER.
I ADMIT IT, I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU.
FOR SOME REASON, LOOT IS, TOO.
AND THE LOST.
THE WOUNDED HAVE TO STICK TOGETHER.
I KNOW WHERE I AM NOW, THOMAS.


I'D INVITE YOU IN, BUT MY MOM ISN'T THE BIGGEST FAN.
I WOULDN'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY.
I'M NOT COMING IN. I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT DEL SOL.
THE MILITARY IS PULLING BACK. DEL SOL--
WHAT I'M HEARING IS HE'S MAKING A RUN FOR IT SOUTH OF THE BORDER.
WHERE THE NATIONAL GUARD CAN'T TOUCH HIM.
BUT *YOU* CAN.
THOSE GOVERNMENT GOONS KILLED THE FIRST DEL SOL WHEN I GOT TOO CLOSE. THEY DIDN'T WANT THE WORD OUT.
BUT THE WORD IS GOING TO GET OUT ON THIS, IF I CAN TRUST AN AVENGER.
WHICH MEANS THEY WON'T CHASE HIM.
HOW ABOUT IT, LOOT? WANT TO GO HUNTING?
YOU KNOW, I WAS JUST GETTING ATTACHED TO THE LITTLE FURBALL.
AND WITH NICKNAMES LIKE THAT, I'M DOING HIM A FAVOR BY TAKING HIM BACK.

YOU'RE COMING BACK?
GOD WILLING.
WELL, THAT'S PRESUMPTUOUS.

I DON'T DO FRIENDS WELL, TUGGS.
BUT YOU'VE BEEN A SOLID ONE.

WE HAVE OTHERS. LOOK AFTER THEM.

AND I'LL SEE YOU FOR BREAKFAST.
GOOD HUNTING.

I'M SURE I'LL HEAR ABOUT IT ON THE NEWS.

WE GO EAST THEN AND WE'LL BE LET IN AT JUÁREZ!
JUST KEEP GOING SOUTH!
ZZZZZZZZ

I ASSUME YOU'RE HERE TO KILL ME, VIGILANTE?

YES.
BUT ONLY AFTER I MAKE AN EXAMPLE OF YOU.